IV

THE CITY GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LOUIS

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY STUDIES
IN
HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

HERBERT B. ADAMS, Editor

History is past Politics and Politics present History — *Freeman*

FIFTH SERIES

IV

THE CITY GOVERNMENT
OF
SAINT LOUIS

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BALTIMORE
N. MURRAY, PUBLICATION AGENT, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
APRIL, 1887

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JOHN MURPHY & CO., PRINTERS,
BALTIMORE.

THE CITY GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LOUIS.

I.

On the fifteenth of February, 1764, a small party of Frenchmen acting under the orders of Pierre Laclede Liguest, who had previously fixed upon this spot for a settlement, cleared a bit of ground on the right bank of the Mississippi and erected temporary dwellings. Auguste Chouteau was the leader of this company of about thirty men, and his name with that of Laclede is inseparably connected with the founding of the great city of Saint Louis, the name of which comes from the patron saint of the then reigning king of France, Louis XV.

To the hunters and mechanics who made up this colony, Laclede, acting under the authority of the charter granted him by the French king, allotted holdings of land, but for some months no organized plan of civil government was needed. In October, 1765, St. Ange de Bellerive, who had just surrendered the country east of the Mississippi to the English, according to the terms of the Treaty of Paris, and had withdrawn his command to St. Louis, was given by the unanimous voice of the people full powers for the government of the settlement until a legally appointed successor should arrive. No man among them was better fitted for such a high and responsible position. Thus the first government of St. Louis was strictly

democratic in form. The organization of this first civil government was then completed by the act of the Governor-General of Louisiana who appointed two judges, an attorney-general and a notary. Spain was the legal owner after the Peace of Paris of this part of Louisiana, but as yet no action had been taken by that country to claim her own, and for some years St. Louis was ruled by its inhabitants under French authority. When Don Pedro Piernas, the Spanish Lieutenant Governor, arrived in Upper Louisiana in the spring of 1770, but little change was made in the administration of the affairs of St. Louis, which were, in the main, conducted wisely during all the period of Spanish rule in Louisiana. The retrocession of the territory to France in the early part of the century and the sale to the United States by Napoleon in 1803 were the final steps in a series of changes which were of much importance to the general interests of the nations concerned, but which made little difference to the growing town of St. Louis. The population grew, business increased, and peace reigned.

It was not until the year 1808 that St. Louis was legally incorporated as a town. On the eighteenth of July of that year an act was passed by the Legislature of the Territory of Louisiana, entitled "An act concerning towns in this Territory." November ninth, on petition of two-thirds of the taxable inhabitants, the Court of Common Pleas for the district of St. Louis incorporated the town. This first charter of St. Louis fixed the limits of the town as follows, in terms hardly intelligible to the present resident of the then French village; . . . "Beginning at Antoine Roy's mill on the bank of the Mississippi; thence running sixty arpens west; thence south on said line of sixty arpens in the rear until the same comes to the barrier Denoyer; thence due south until it comes to the Sugar-loaf; thence due east to the Mississippi; from thence by the Mississippi along low-water mark to the place first mentioned." Its taxable boundaries were also fixed; and provision was made for a board of five trustees to whom was to be confided the administration of town affairs. Decem-

ber sixth was fixed as the day when the first body of trustees should be elected by popular vote, but the people, even before the town was incorporated, met at the court-house and elected trustees for one year. January 23, 1808, is, therefore, the proper date of the beginning of the history of St. Louis as a corporation.

The charter gave to these trustees not only executive, but legislative, functions and they enacted ordinances for the government of the town which were afterward, when the town had become a city, placed upon the statute-books. A perusal of these ordinances reminds us of times and conditions of society which seem more than eighty years back. We find it ordained, for example, among other clauses intended to preserve the proper relations between masters and slaves, that "every white person who shall associate with slaves at their balls, or other amusements, shall for every such offence forfeit and pay the sum of ten dollars;" and upon conviction of any person for violation of this or any other ordinance of like nature "all fines and penalties accruing therefrom shall be appropriated, one-half to the informer, and the other half to the chairman for the use of the town." Loud complaints were uttered in those days about "the putrid carcasses of cows, hogs, dogs, etc. which obstructed the streets of St. Louis;" and about the wretched, unpaved streets and foot-paths, the stagnant ponds, and the high taxes. At the election of Madison in 1809 St. Louis gave her first vote for presidential electors. Missouri was not in the Union as a State, but a record of the vote of St. Louis is worth noting as an indication of her voting population and political preferences. The vote stood 122 for James Madison, 48 for Charles Pinckney, and 6 for George Clinton; 176 in all. The principal currency of the town was peltries, lead, and whiskey. Taxes were paid without the services of a regular collector until 1810, when an ordinance was passed providing for a collector to be appointed by the Chairman of the Board. In the same year provison was made for the organization of fire-companies and for much needed improve-

ment of streets and bridges. That this was the day of small things may be readily seen from a statement of receipts and expenditures for the year 1811, in which we find the total expenditure of the town government for the year to be $632.87½, exceeding the receipts by $84.57½. The population at this time was not far from 2,000. Various town ordinances were passed in 1811; one, for example, fixing a penalty of a ten-dollar fine for the offence of keeping any store on Sunday "for the purpose of vending goods or merchandise on the Sabbath-day, or Sunday, between the hours of eight o'clock in the morning and sundown." One also obliges every boat of five tons burthen within the Territory of Louisiana to pay a duty of two dollars; and another provides "for levying and collecting a tax within the limits of the town of St. Louis." In 1813, 217 votes were cast at the time of the second election of James Madison, and the population in 1815 was returned by the sheriff as 2,600.

Such, stated very briefly, are the various steps in the progress of civil government in St. Louis from its settlement to the admission of Missouri into the Union as a State in August, 1821.

II.

For two or three years before the admission of Missouri as a State the question of a city charter was agitated in St. Louis, but it was not until December 9, 1822, that the act of incorporation passed the State legislature, constituting a body politic and corporate by the name and style of *The Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of the City of St. Louis.* The western boundary of this city of sixty-five years ago was Seventh Street, which was a long way from the settled portions of the town. All west of Seventh Street was rolling, wooded prairie, a favorite hunting and shooting ground, now for miles covered with substantial business houses and fine residences, and threaded with well-paved streets. The administration of the affairs of the corporation was vested in a Mayor and Board of Aldermen.

The mayor was to be elected yearly, as also were the nine aldermen. Both Mayor and Aldermen were to possess a freehold estate within the city limits. They were vested with powers differing little from those conferred upon like officers in more modern city charters. The right to vote for these officers on the first day of April in each year was given to "all free white male persons of the age of twenty-one years who have paid a city tax." The question of accepting or rejecting this charter was laid before the qualified voters of the town on the first Monday in March, 1823. 107 voted for and 90 against the charter. The small vote is partly accounted for by the fact that many otherwise qualified voters had not yet paid the tax to the town corporation, and hence could not vote upon this matter. After the adoption of the charter the new city was divided into three wards, and on the 7th of April, 1823, William Carr Lane was elected the first Mayor of St. Louis. It may be said here, in passing, that his administration of city affairs was so satisfactory that he was re-elected in 1824, '25, '26, '27, and '28, and after an interval of ten years, in 1838, '39 and '40. The first Mayor's message delivered west of the Mississippi was read to the board of aldermen on the 14th of April, 1823. The Mayor touched upon the prospects of future greatness, the perplexing and ever-to-be-recurring question of street reconstruction and improvement, the importance of harbor and river improvements, and of the Mississippi as the highway of the city to prosperity, the public health, the need of a better water-supply, and of a city hospital. A City Register, City Auditor, Street Commissioner, Assessors and other minor officers were then appointed and the new government was now fairly in operation. The salary of the Mayor was put at $300. The Aldermen received no emolument. The next year after the re-election of William Carr Lane his salary was made $600, and one per cent. upon all moneys paid into the treasury was made the compensation of the Treasurer.

Up to the year 1809 the old French names of streets had been retained. From 1809 to 1826 the east and west streets

were lettered north and south of Market Street, North A, South A, &c. In 1826, by a city ordinance, the streets within the then north and south limits of the town were given the names which they have since kept. Second and Fourth Streets were paved in 1827, and by the end of the year 1829 streets were laid out and partly paved as far as Seventh Street, the western boundary of St. Louis City. Third Street was not widened and paved until 1831. The offices of city surveyor and street commissioner were united by ordinance in 1829.

The charter of 1822, with some trifling amendments, continued in force until February 26th, 1835, when the legislature passed an act by which the city was constituted a body politic under the style of the *Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of St. Louis.* By this new charter the powers of the corporation were much enlarged. Its powers were vested in a Mayor and twelve Aldermen, three from each of the four wards. The Mayor was to be at least thirty years of age, a citizen of the United States, a resident of the city for two years, at least, before his election, to possess a freehold estate within the city, and not to hold any office of honor, trust or profit under the United States at the time of his election. The revised ordinances were adopted which prescribed "the duties of the register, the mode and manner of holding city elections, and for registering free negroes and mulattoes; for guaging and inspecting domestic liquors; for the inspection of flour, beef, pork, &c.; for weighing hay and stove-coal; for the suppression of riots, routs, &c.; concerning the police; registering and restraining dogs; providing fire-buckets; restraining hogs; concerning breaches of ordinances; establishing a treasury department; regulating wagons, drays, and carriages; establishing the health department; appointing a city attorney and a night-watch; suppression of gambling; restraining the assembling of negroes and mulattoes; regulating the revenue and taxes; regulating the water-works; regulating the harbor of St. Louis; establishing quarantine and vaccination; lighting the city with gas; regulating the care and improvement of streets

and highways, city market, &c." The variety of matters belonging to these ordinances shows how the little city of only about 5,000 inhabitants was struggling fifty years ago with all the serious problems which beset those who administer municipal affairs now-a-days.

Municipal officers at this time received but slight compensation for the amount of time and labor devoted to city affairs. The Mayor's salary was now $800 a year. For attendance at each meeting Aldermen received two, and the President three dollars. When members were absent fines were levied and when paid placed in a fund used for a banquet at the end of the year. The City Register received $800; the Treasurer, $400, and the other officers a similarly low rate of compensation. The policeman were few in number and all persons on the streets after ten o'clock were very likely to be stopped by the night-watch, who asked the reason for such late hours, and perhaps escorted them to their homes or to the watch-house. It was also the duty of the night-watch "to apprehend all slaves that may be found in the streets, lanes, or alleys, or on the private property of persons other than their owners, or the persons under whose control they are at the time, after the hour of nine o'clock at night from October 1st to April 1st, and after ten p. m. from April 1st to October 1st." For violation of this ordinance a fine of three dollars was imposed upon the owner, or the slave received a number of lashes, not exceeding twenty-five, "well laid on." A proclamation of the Mayor in 1832 notifies masters of slaves that "the recent extensive distribution in this city of incendiary, abolition newspapers, tracts and pictures, effected secretly in the night-time by casting packages into yards and other places where they would be found by servants, compels all officers who are concerned in maintaining the public peace to deny the colored people some of their usual privileges until those enemies of the human race, the abolitionists, who have evidently done this deed, are discovered and dealt with according to law. . . . The usual permits from this office to colored people for social

parties and religious meetings after night will be withheld until information is given of the hiding-place of the incendiaries, which must be known to some of our colored people."

February 11, 1839, by an Act of the General Assembly of the State, a new charter was given to the city. The City Council was to consist of two chambers, a Board of Aldermen and a Board of Delegates; the former to be composed of two members from each ward chosen every second year; the latter of three from each ward chosen for three years. The executive officers were a Mayor, a Register, an Auditor, a Treasurer, a Marshal, and an Engineer. No charter before this of 1839 had stated with sufficient explicitness the necessary qualifications of a voter. These qualifications were now given in the plainest terms. He must be a citizen of the United States, must be twenty-one years old, must have resided in the city twelve months next preceding the election, and must have paid a city tax within a year next preceding such election. The name of the voter must be indorsed upon his ballot. It is to be noticed, also, that any inhabitant of the State not a resident of the city, who owned a freehold estate within it and who had paid the tax required by law, was allowed to vote at any election in the ward where his property was situated.

In 1840 the City Guard "appointed to keep watch and guard every night throughout the year," consisted of a captain, three lieutenants, and twenty-eight privates. In this year the Council created the "fire-wardens and property guards of the city of St. Louis," from which legislation sprang afterward the excellent "salvage corps," which now does good service at fires in removing or covering goods and merchandise. The erection and regulation of a work-house was also an Act of the year 1840, for the punishment of "all persons legally committed by due course of law for any violation of ordinances for which a fine shall be imposed and the convict shall refuse or be unable to pay such fine and costs."

By an Act of February 15, 1841, the boundaries of the city were enlarged and the following year an "engineering de-

partment" was established, composed of the City Engineer, a Street Commissioner, and Superintendent of the water-works. By another Act of the Legislature in February, 1843, the various Acts before passed incorporating the city of St. Louis and amending the articles of incorporation were reduced to one Act. The corporate style was changed to that of *The City of St. Louis*, and the charter was in many respects made more clear and simple.

It was in this year that agitation began upon the subject of separating St. Louis county from the city. The question was decided against separation in August, 1844, but was continually arising for thirty years. In another part of this paper will be given the details of the final success of the party advocating division.

Several important offices were created in 1843, among others those of Harbor Master and of Street Commissioner, and of Inspectors, whose duty it was to superintend the cleaning of streets, alleys, avenues, market-places and public squares. By an ordinance of September 2, a Health Department was established, to consist of the Health Officer and one member of the Board of Aldermen from each ward. Street Inspectors were placed under the control of the Board of Health. The Health Officer was to be appointed by the Mayor for six months, and chosen alternately from the Professors of the Medical Department of Kemper College and that of the St. Louis University.

By the Act of Incorporation in 1822 no person could vote at a city election who had not paid a city tax. Various attempts were made to repeal this provision of the charter, and this was the issue in the municipal election of 1844. The enemies of this provision declared that the election of 1843 had been carried by the dog-tax; that men who had never owned a dog, went on election day and paid a dog-tax and thus qualified as voters; that clubs were formed to issue these dog-tax certificates. Others said that paying a water-license was paying a tax, and claimed the right to vote. After an

animated and exciting election, the Whig candidate for Mayor was elected and the unpopular tax-paying qualification defeated.

In 1852 a number of citizens petitioned the County Court to incorporate as a town a district lying about one mile west of "St. Louis Common Fields." The petition was granted and the name *Second Municipality of the City of St. Louis* was taken as its corporate title. This Second Municipality had its own Police, its Recorder's Court, the right to levy and collect taxes, and, in short, all rights that are usually granted to incorporated towns.

Sixteen years had elapsed since any material change in the charter of St. Louis had been made by the Legislature of the State, when in March, 1859, an Act was passed "amendatory of and supplemental to the several Acts incorporating the city of St. Louis." Among other things it was provided that the "City Council should consist of one Board called the Common Council, who should possess all the powers and exercise all the functions of the Board of Aldermen and City Council as heretofore constituted." This Board was to consist of twenty members, two for each ward, one-half of the members to be elected in each year to serve two years. It was under this amended charter that St. Louis passed through the trying period of the civil war. No city in the Union was placed in a more embarrassing and perplexing situation. Business was well-nigh suspended; commercial and manufacturing interests were prostrated; unity and harmony among citizens were destroyed; and the administration of city affairs in any satisfactory manner became almost impossible. A majority of the citizens were, however, loyal to the United States Government and to the municipal laws and regulations, and the city survived this most trying ordeal without loss of reputation as a law-abiding community, although greatly crippled in every business and social interest. Shortly after the war, in 1866, by a legislative act, the Council was divided into two branches, and by another revision in 1871 it was provided that all elective and appointive officers should hold their offices for the term of two years.

The city of Carondelet was incorporated with the city of St. Louis in 1870. The revised charter requiring the city to be divided into not less than twelve wards, and the population seeming to justify even more than twelve, a thirteenth ward was created which had its first representation in the Council in 1873, but on the reorganization of the wards in 1874 this thirteenth ward disappeared.

III.

We now come to an important and radical change in the government of the city and in its relation to the county of St. Louis, of which it had up to this time been a part.

The State of Missouri adopted a new Constitution in 1875. In Article IX, section 20, the following provision was made for a change in the charter of the city of St. Louis: "The city of St. Louis may extend its limits so as to embrace the parks now within its boundaries, and other convenient and contiguous territory, and frame a charter for the government of the city thus enlarged, upon the following conditions, that is to say:

"The Council of the City and the County Court of Saint Louis shall, at the request of the Mayor of Saint Louis, meet in joint session and order an election, to be held as provided for general elections, by the qualified voters of the city and county, of a Board of Thirteen Freeholders of such city or county, whose duty shall be to propose a scheme for the enlargement and definition of the boundaries of the city, the reorganization of the county, the adjustment between the relations between the city thus enlarged and the residue of St. Louis county, and the government of the city thus enlarged by a charter in harmony with and subject to the Constitution and laws of Missouri, which shall, among other things, provide for a Chief Executive and two Houses of Legislation, one of which shall be elected by general ticket, which scheme and charter shall be signed in duplicate by said Board, or a major-

ity of them, and one of them returned to the Mayor of the city and the other to the Presiding Justice of the County Court within ninety days after the election of such Board. Within thirty days thereafter the City Council and County Court shall submit such scheme to the qualified voters of the whole county, and such charter to the qualified voters of the city so enlarged, at an election to be held not less than twenty nor more than thirty days after the order thereof; and if a majority of such qualified voters voting at such election shall ratify such scheme and charter, then such scheme shall become the organic law of the county and city, and such charter the organic law of the city, and at the end of sixty days thereafter shall take the place of and supersede the charter of St. Louis and all amendments thereof and all special laws relating to St. Louis county inconsistent with such scheme."

In accordance with this section of the new constitution a Board of thirteen freeholders was duly appointed. On the 3d of July, 1876, they reported the *Scheme for the Government of the County and City of St. Louis.* The constitution had provided that copies of the scheme and charter should be delivered to the Mayor of the city and to the presiding Justice of the County Court "within ninety days after the election of said Board." The delivery of the latter was not made until twenty minutes after twelve o'clock on the morning of the 4th of July. The ninety days expired at midnight. It was, therefore, held by some that the law had not been complied with, and that the whole scheme fell to the ground. The matter was, upon this quibble, referred to the County Counsellor for an opinion. In the meantime Mayor Overstolz raised no question on this point, called the City Council in special session on the 12th, and invited the County Court to be present and take such joint action with the Council as the case should call for. On Tuesday the County Counsellor gave it as his opinion that the point of the County Court was not well taken; that such a trivial irregularity could not defeat the purpose of the constitutional convention and the will of the

people; and so on Wednesday the two bodies met, as had been arranged, and made preparations for the special election for presenting the new plan to the suffrages of the county and city. This election was one of great interest. For days before that set for the settlement of the matter the daily newspapers were full of articles, editorial and contributed, in which the merits and defects of the scheme and charter were set forth in detail. By their friends it was contended that the double-headed system then in force was anomalous and absurd, not to dwell upon the acknowledged fact that it was badly administered. Two bodies levied taxes within the same territory, neither of which fairly represented the people because neither was voted for at large. By the scheme and charter, they said, all this would be remedied. Each government would be remanded to its proper sphere and their relations would be properly adjusted. The County Court would exercise authority only within the County of St. Louis, and the City Council would be made, in truth, as well as in name, the legislative body of the city. This Council, with its upper and lower houses, would be truly representative in character. The city government would possess a character and dignity before unknown to it, and its operation in all directions would be thorough and systematic. These advantages were summed up as follows by a writer in the *St. Louis Republican* of August 19, 1876, three days before the election:

"*First.*—It secures one government for the city of St. Louis.

"*Second.*—It secures a good charter.

"*Third.*—It secures a charter which can be amended in three ways:—

"(*a*).—By virtue of its own powers;

"(*b*).—By virtue of an Act of the Legislature passed as a general law and accepted by the Mayor and assembly in lieu of a charter;

"(*c*).—By virtue of a new election of thirteen freeholders to form a new charter.

"*Fourth.*—It secures a reduction of taxes in three localities:—

"(*a*).—By a reduction in the old city limits of 35½ cents on the $100 value.

"(*b*).—By a reduction in the new limits of assessments on farming lands, and by 20½ cents on the $100 of such value.

"(*c*).—By a reduction in the new county of 20½ cents on the $100 value, and by a release from the entire debt of city and county.

"*Fifth.*—It secures the city from further extension of its limits.

"*Sixth.*—It secures county lands used for farming purposes from actual confiscation if required to pay the city and county debt *pro rata* with the city property.

"*Seventh.*—It secures a uniform system of public schools in the city and in the new limits of the city, with a gradation of school taxes in the new limits for the actual expense only of maintaining the schools.

"*Eighth.*—It secures to the people a fixed policy of government which cannot be changed in principle and form, although subject to change in detail.

"*Ninth.*—It secures forever the abolition of the County Court and its double, expensive, irresponsible and vicious system.

"*Tenth.*—It secures to the people a rest from political rings to control the hard-earned money paid by oppressed and overburdened tax payers.

"*Eleventh.*—It secures one system of official power, one of paying taxes, one of assessment, and one of expenditure, and holds all persons responsible for the faithful discharge of duty.

"*Twelfth.*—It secures this separation by details in the charter which, if objectionable, can be amended at the next session of the Legislature."

On the other hand, it was urged by the enemies of the scheme that it discriminated in favor of the rich man and against the poor man; that certain parts of the charter would permit the existence of great frauds;—that the Mayor would have too great power and could continue in office through the patronage at

his command; that the Council, the Board of Health, and, in fact, all the departments of government were given dangerous and arbitrary powers. Many of those who lived outside the old city limits would, if the change were made, have to pay much larger taxes than under the county government. Some of these made bitter and strenuous opposition to the new plan.

For several years the city debt had been rapidly increasing. If the new charter were adopted, with it would come a prohibition against further increase beyond a given point. Some argued against this particular feature of the charter, saying that an increase of city indebtedness was no evil, if with debt came the worth of their money, so to speak;—if water-works, sewers, parks and public improvements in general were amply provided.

On the whole, however, the contest may be regarded as one between friends and opponents of reform. When the election was held the city gave majorities for both the scheme and the charter. The vote of the county was for some time in doubt on account of the necessity of inquiry and decision concerning certain alleged fraudulent votes. It was not until the fifth of March, 1877, that the Court of Appeals decided the scheme and charter to be adopted, the former by a majority of 1,253 votes and the latter by a majority of 3,221 votes.

Thus the city of St. Louis became a separate municipality without any county connections whatever. The old County Court became a thing of the past. All the old county buildings, the courthouse, the jail, the insane asylum, the poor farm, became the property of the city, subject to its exclusive authority. The old county debt became a city obligation. All the county taxes of 1876 collected within the new city limits as defined by the scheme of separation became subject to the city's demand. All the county taxes of 1876 collected in the new county were subject to its order. All the county officers chosen the previous November under the supposition that the scheme and charter had been defeated were not *de jure* officers at all,

and had to give up their positions. After the fight was over, the general feeling was that both city and county would benefit by the severance. Since that time St. Louis has been a separate and independent city, with large powers of self-government, with a greatly enlarged area—not, however, by any means the most desirable feature of the new charter—fine public parks, a river front of fifteen miles, with a charter so vigorous in its provisions against extravagance and corruption and so careful in the protection of the rights of property that nothing would seem to be needed but reasonable performance of duty on the part of its tax-paying citizens to make the government of St. Louis what the government of a great city in modern days, in a great republic, should be.

IV.

Let us now examine with some care the salient points of the present charter of the city of St. Louis.

The city is divided into twenty-eight wards. Each ward is subdivided into voting precincts, the number of which is now 244. Ten days before every election held in the city the Mayor appoints four competent persons to act as judges of election, not more than two of whom can belong to the same political party, and also two of different parties to act as clerks at each election district of the city. If any of the persons appointed as judges of election fail or refuse to act, the legal voters of the district assembled at the polls on the morning of the day of election, to the number of not less than fifteen, have power at the hour when the polls are to open to elect some person possessing the proper qualifications to fill any existing vacancy. At the close of every hour during the day of election, the ballot-box containing the ballots cast during the previous hour is, in each voting precinct, opened in the presence of two receiving judges and receiving clerks, and the ballots counted, another box having been substituted for receiving ballots cast during the next hour; so that

the total number of votes polled at the close of each hour may be announced to such electors as are present. The judges and clerks are, however, prohibited from giving any information concerning the number of votes received by any candidate, or any other information which will show the state of the polls. Each political party has the right to name one representative to be present with the judges of election from the opening to the closing of the polls. At the closing of the polls, the ballots having been thus counted and the names on the list of registered voters which are marked "voted" having also been counted, are placed in sealed boxes and delivered to the register, who must keep them in his office for twelve months. They cannot be inspected while in the register's hands unless on the order of a proper court. Another excellent provision is that which prohibits anyone from soliciting votes or offering tickets within two hundred feet of the voting place. Tickets, however, can be placed near the voting-place, and are protected by the police from removal or destruction. No election district shall contain more than five hundred voters. These provisions have made election-days in St. Louis even more quiet than other days, for saloons are closed by the Mayor's proclamation until midnight and disorder of any kind is comparatively a rare thing nowadays at the polls. No ingenuity of man's device, it would seem, can secure with absolute certainty a perfectly honest election in every precinct. Charges of fraud, in many cases shown by testimony in court to be well-founded, are heard after every election; but such evasions of law are comparatively few and unimportant.

The municipal election is held on the first Tuesday in April once in every four years except in certain cases to be mentioned hereafter. The first election under this charter was held on the first Tuesday of April, 1877.

Qualifications for Voters.

The qualifications for voters are the same in all elections, and are substantially as follows: Every voter must be a male

citizen of the United States, or a person of foreign birth who has declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States not less than one year nor more than five years before he offers to vote; he must be twenty-one years of age, must have resided in the State one year, and in the city of St. Louis sixty days before the election at which he offers to vote; he must vote in the district in which his name is registered.

The Mayor

Holds his office for four years, his term beginning immediately after the general election in April. The salary of the Mayor is, at present, five thousand dollars; fixed according to the charter provision by the Municipal Assembly. He is the chief executive officer of the city. He must be at least thirty years of age and a freeholder, and, as well as all other elected and appointed officers, must be a citizen of the United States and a resident of St. Louis for at least two years prior to his election.

At the beginning of the third year of his term it is the duty of the Mayor to fill by appointment, with the concurrence of the Council, a number of important offices:—those of City Counsellor, District Assessors, Superintendent of Work-house, Superintendent of the House of Refuge, Superintendent of the Fire and Police Telegraph, a Commissioner of Supplies, an Assessor of Water-rates, two Police Justices, an Attorney, a Jailor, five Commissioners on Charitable Institutions, and a Board of Public Improvements—all of whom hold office for four years. It is believed that appointments made in the middle of the Mayor's term will be much more independently made than if made immediately after the general election. The pressure upon the Mayor is certainly less severe at the beginning of the third than at the beginning of the first year of his term. The provision was a wise one, and has, on the whole, worked well. Any one of these officers appointed by the Mayor may be suspended by him and removed by the Council for cause, and all such officers are subject to removal by a majority of the Council.

It is the duty of the Mayor to inform the Assembly of the state of the city and recommend for their consideration such measures as he shall deem proper; he may call special sessions of the Assembly; he shall approve or reject all bills presented to his consideration by the Assembly, and no bill shall become an ordinance without his consent unless passed over his veto by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly; he may object to one or more items of an appropriation bill, while approving other portions of the bill, and such objection is fatal to the portions of the bill to which objection is made unless passed over the Mayor's veto as in the case of ordinary bills. It is his duty to assist the Comptroller, the Auditor, and other financial officers of the city in guarding its fiscal interests; to order suits to be commenced against any officer not accounting properly for money intrusted to him; to decide questions of difference between officers of the city relative to their powers and duties; to see that all contracts and agreements are faithfully kept and performed; to submit to the Assembly annual reports, with his message, from the chiefs of the several departments; and to perform many and various minor duties which need not be specified here.

The Municipal Assembly

Is composed of two branches:—(1) *The Council;* (2) *The House of Delegates.* The Council consists of thirteen members, one of whom is its President, chosen for four years, upon a general ticket. It was provided in the charter that of those chosen at the first general election in April, 1877, the President and the six receiving the highest number of votes should hold office for four years and the other six for two years. After the expiration of two years the vacancies then occurring should be filled by election for four years. Every member of the Council must be a qualified voter, must be at least thirty years of age, must have been a citizen of the State five years and an inhabitant of the city and a freeholder therein for one year before the day of his election.

The House of Delegates consists of one member from each ward chosen every two years by the qualified voters therein. Every delegate must have been a citizen of the United States and an inhabitant of the city for three years, a resident of his ward one year, and must have paid city and state taxes at least two years next before the day of his election. Vacancies in either house are filled by special elections ordered by the Mayor. Each member of the Assembly receives for his services the sum of three hundred dollars annually and reasonable expenses incurred in the public service and approved by the house to which he belongs.

The powers of the Assembly may be stated briefly to be: to assess, levy and collect all taxes, general and special; to borrow money on the credit of the city; to appropriate money for the legitimate expenses of the city and to provide for its debts and expenses; to erect or rent suitable buildings for all needful purposes; to control the harbor privileges of the city; to license and tax various occupations and professions; to establish and enforce quarantine laws, and to suppress nuisances; to regulate and fix the standard of weights and measures to be used in the city; to unite with the Mayor in appointing certain city officers; to care for streets and bridges; to protect the rights of the city in any corporation in which the city may have an interest; in short, to pass all laws for maintaining the peace, good government, health and welfare of the city, its trade, commerce, and manufactures.

The Assembly is limited in its power of taxing all property east of the former western boundary line to one per centum for municipal purposes and for paying the city debt, and on the portion called the "extended limits," lying west of the old boundary, to four-tenths of one per centum for paying interest on the existing indebtedness. The rate in the "extended limits" may, however, be increased upon all property which shall have been laid out in building lots and which shall have six or more buildings of an assessed value of not less than six thousand dollars in the aggregate. This difference in the rate

of taxation in the older and the newer portions of the city will to some extent account for the rapid growth of this western part of St. Louis, at the expense, in many cases, of that territory lying east of Grand avenue, the old western boundary line.

The Board of Public Improvements

Is composed of five commissioners: a street commissioner, a sewer commissioner, a water commissioner, a harbor and wharf commissioner, and a park commissioner, all appointed by the Mayor, together with a president chosen at the general election. This Board meets at least once a week. The commissioners are, respectively, the heads of their several departments, and are responsible for all the acts of their employés. Their names indicate with sufficient definiteness the general nature of their duties, but it may be well to mention the special interest which attaches to these offices in St. Louis.

The Street Commissioner

Has under his special charge the construction and repairs and cleaning of public streets, alleys and squares. For many years, indeed, until within the last five years, the streets of St. Louis were a disgrace to the city. In 1849 a writer in a newspaper said: "There is not a city in the United States expending the same amount of money for this purpose that is half as filthy as St. Louis, and we may safely say that there is not one in the world which could be cleaned with so little expense if a proper system was introduced." Miles of streets were paved with broken limestone, which made the worst kind of mud in wet weather and fine, permeating dust in dry. A few streets in the business section of the city had wooden pavements, poorly laid and almost worse than the limestone. After the adoption of the scheme and charter the limit to the power of taxation seemed to make good streets a greater impossibility than before. Time and

again the matter was brought before the Municipal Assembly by the Mayors. In 1873 Mayor Brown said in his message, "the new kind of wood pavement and limestone blocks are the only pavements at all suitable to our streets and within our reach in price." And yet those pavements were so poor that no effort to get them could expect to meet with success. In 1874 the people of St. Louis were asked at the election to authorize the issue of $2,500,000 of reconstruction bonds, but the measure was defeated. At length it became evident to all that unless some radical street improvements were made, St. Louis would fall rapidly behind other cities in many other respects her inferiors. At a meeting of the Commercial Club held in January, 1882,—an organization of wealthy and influential business men whose purpose is to discuss and further measures for the interests of the city—a paper was read by Col. George E. Leighton, one of the most active members of the club, setting forth in the most admirable manner the pressing need of better streets and urging special taxation upon the abutting property as the only possible way to meet the expense of improvement which had become absolutely necessary.

This paper was presented as the report of a committee appointed at a previous meeting to investigate this important subject. The propositions of Col. Leighton upon which the argument of his report and the action of the Commercial Club were based were as follows, and are given here to show the real basis upon which has rested all street improvements since 1882:—

"1. The absolute and unqualified abandonment of so-called MacAdam of *soft limestone* for a street surface.

"2. A policy of resistance to the increase of street area except at the exclusive expense of adjacent property, until the present streets are more generally occupied by improvements.

"3. The reconstruction of streets in the business portion of the city, say east of Twelfth, and between Franklin avenue and Walnut, with *granite blocks* only, laid in the most thorough and approved manner on concrete foundation.

"4. The reconstruction of all streets, *outside of this district*, of considerable light traffic, with wood or asphalt, and of all thoroughfares subject to a heavy traffic with granite.

"5. The reconstruction of the streets of minor traffic with some durable material which will not pulverize under ordinary use.

"6. The payment for street reconstruction should in all cases be by special assessments against abutting property."

After discussing the first five propositions, the paper emphasizes the fact that paying by special tax for such improvements is not only "the wisest and most economical, but is, on the whole, the *only just and proper method*." As a matter of fact in the present case it was also the only practicable method of paving the streets of St. Louis, for, as has been said, the limitations of the charter made any general fund which could be used for such purposes an impossibility. Col. Leighton urged upon the club, representing as it did so much of the wealth, enterprise, and public spirit of the city, and owning much real estate in all parts of St. Louis, that each member should give his influence to a favorable solution of this difficult problem. "If we are content with the streets as they are," said he, "let us cling to the old system. If we are not, let us support the more progressive sentiment of the day, giving it, as we may, a sound and wise direction, and pay our full share of the cost." Proper proceedings were soon after had to carry out these suggestions. The Street Commissioner and the Municipal Assembly took up the matter in good earnest. The legality of special assessments to pay for paving was tested in the Courts and a final decision rendered in favor of the city. Since that movement began nearly all the business portion of the city has been paved with granite blocks laid in the most thorough manner upon a concrete foundation, and several miles of asphalt and of wood have been laid after a new and approved style, throughout the residence territory. About ten miles are laid yearly, and now no opposition is made to the work. Many of those, even, who once bitterly opposed the special tax fea-

ture of the plan are now among the foremost in urging on the work. St. Louis has gained more than can possibly be told during these five years of improvement.

The Sewer Commissioner

Has special charge of the construction, repairs, and cleaning of all sewers and appurtenances belonging thereto. By the charter it is ordered that a sewer system shall be provided. This system consists of three classes: "public," "district," and "private" sewers. The first are constructed under regulations provided by the Board of Public Improvements and paid for by an appropriation from the public revenue. The second class are constructed with suitable connections with the public sewers when the majority of the property owners in the district shall petition therefor, and the expense is paid by a special tax levied on the abutting property. All repairs and cleaning of the district sewers are paid for from the public funds. The private sewers, which connect with the other parts of the system, are constructed under the direction of the Sewer Commissioner and all expense connected with their building, repairing, and cleaning are paid by private persons. When we note the fact that up to the present time upward of seven millions of dollars have been spent since the first sewers were begun many years ago, and that since the adoption of the new charter in 1877 this expenditure has been more than one million, it will be understood that the office of Sewer Commissioner is one of great importance, to be filled by a thoroughly competent engineer. St. Louis is fortunately situated as regards the ease of drainage, and has now a system which seems amply adequate for all purposes for many years.

The Water Commissioner

Has under his special charge all the property connected with the water-works and general supervision over the entire water-

works department, excepting the assessment and collection of water-rates which are in the hands of an assessor and collector appointed by the Mayor.

The water of the Mississippi has always been used by the people of St. Louis from the earliest days of the history of the town. "A long period elapsed," writes Professor Waterhouse in the *History of St. Louis*, "before any wells were dug, and the original water-works of St. Louis consisted of a man with Chinese attachments, the water being carried in buckets fastened by strips of wood to a yoke which rested on the shoulders. Sometimes the water was brought up to the village from the river on a rude sledge drawn by ponies. This sledge was constructed of two long poles connected by cross-bows, the front ends being used as shafts and the rear ends resting on the ground. On this primitive 'drag' barrels of water were hauled up for the use of the inhabitants. In course of time a few wells were dug on Second and Third Streets, but the cost was so great that only a wealthy man could afford the luxury, the expense of sinking a well through the thick bed of limestone amounting in some instances to one thousand dollars,—in those days a modest fortune. Nor was the effort to obtain water always successful even when the well had been sunk. . . . The river water was healthful and pleasant to the taste, but in summer too warm to be palatable. As ice-houses were then unknown, wells were the only sources from which a supply of cool water could be obtained. . . . In cool weather the preference for river water was universal."

It was not until 1829 that any move was made to construct a system of water supply, and water was not distributed to the people until 1832. Until 1846 no water pipes were laid west of Fourth Street. The first Board of Water Commissioners was appointed by the Governor of the State in 1865, in accordance with a law passed by the Legislature in January of that year. They saw at once the need of new works, which their successors in office were able to begin in the fall of 1867, and which were completed and ready for public use in March, 1871.

The total value of the water-works, grounds, &c., is now estimated to be not far from eight million dollars, and the yearly revenue about eight hundred thousand dollars. The Water Commissioner, under the present charter, must be a duly qualified engineer. All contracts for work, supplies, &c., ordered by the Water Department, must be approved by the Board of Public Improvements. The water rates are fixed by the Assembly, but they must be at prices which will produce a revenue sufficient at least to pay the interest upon the city water-bonds, and the running expenses of the Water-works Department.

The Harbor and Wharf Commissioner

Is specially charged with the execution of all ordinances of the city relating to dykes, wharf and levee, steamboats and all other boats, vessels, and rafts. He must give personal attention and devote the whole of his time to the duties of his office. A separate account is kept on the city books of all moneys collected from harbor tax, wharfage dues, or other sources relating to harbor.

The Park Commissioner

Has as his duty the care of all the public parks, places, and squares which are under the control of the city. St. Louis is well provided with breathing-places for its people. Besides many smaller openings in the older part of the city, there are *Lafayette Park*, containing thirty acres, one of the oldest parks in St. Louis; *Tower-Grove Park*, of two hundred and seventy-six acres, the gift of Henry Shaw; and the great *Forest Park*, of thirteen hundred and seventy-two acres, purchased by the city in 1872 and brought within the city limits by the adoption of the charter of 1877. At that time Forest Park had already cost the city more than a million and a quarter dollars, and annually about thirty thousand dollars are spent in its care and adornment.

The President of the Board of Public Improvements

Has charge of all public improvements not specially delegated to the other members of the board. He has also a general supervision over the departments of all the commissioners belonging to the board. It is his duty to authenticate all special tax-bills against property-owners, made out and certified to him by the head of the department by which the work has been done.

It is not necessary to emphasize the importance and value of such a board of public officers to a city like St. Louis. The highest professional talent is called for, and has uniformly been secured.

Police Department.

In early days watchmen or "patrolmen" guarded the citizens of St. Louis, taking the place of the village constable of a century ago. In the year 1808 a town ordinance for the first time defined the duties and privileges of the patrolmen. In 1839 the office of city constable was abolished, and provision was made for the appointment by the Mayor of a City Marshal. By an ordinance of the same year the "City Guards" were organized as a police force and the City Marshal made *ex-officio* Captain. In 1841, by a city ordinance, the guard was to consist of a captain, three lieutenants, and twenty-eight privates. One of the conditions of membership in the guard was that the candidate should be "in no way interested in any tavern, coffee-house, or tippling-shop in the city," and should be able to read and write the English language. In 1846 an "independent police" was established, which seems to have been a sort of a detective agency. Complaint was made by the Mayor in 1848 that thirty men were insufficient to guard the rapidly extending city, and between 1848 and 1850 the force was increased by ten new members, and was pronounced very efficient. The police was first put into uni-

form in May, 1854. An ordinance of 1856 reorganized the force, which was then but little changed for several years.

The present metropolitan police force of St. Louis was established by an Act of the Legislature in 1861. The police board consists of four commissioners appointed by the Governor of the State, and the Mayor, who is *ex officio* a member, and it has the entire control and management of the police force of the city. It is expressly provided in the act of establishment that the police organization shall be entirely independent of the city government, and only brief mention of this department need be made here. The officers of the police are: one chief of police, six captains, forty-five sergeants, and four hundred and forty patrolmen, besides turnkeys, janitors, hostlers, &c., making in all a total of five hundred and ninety-three men connected with the department, costing the city upward of half a million dollars yearly. Besides the regular police force about two hundred private watchmen are employed at the expense of their employers. They are, however, sworn in by the police board, wear a distinctive uniform, and may be called upon to assist the regular force, if desired.

Fire Department.

The first ordinance for the formation of fire companies in St. Louis was passed by the Town Trustees in 1810. These companies were named "Leather-bucket Companies," and they served well enough until 1822, when the first fire-engine was purchased. In 1835 a municipal ordinance was passed requiring citizens to have fire-buckets ready for use. By 1841 St. Louis had regular fire companies. In 1850 an Inspector of the Fire Department was appointed by the Mayor, and from that time until the establishment of a paid fire department in 1857 volunteer companies increased in number and in influence. By the present charter the fire department is under the control and supervision of a "Chief of the Fire Department," appointed by the Mayor for four years. He has one first

assistant and four assistant engineers. It is also the duty of the chief of the fire department to inspect all buildings in process of construction, and to see that all ordinances relating to building are carried into effect.

Health Department.

The charter of 1877 created this department to be managed as provided in the charter and by ordinances of the city. The Board of Health consists of the Mayor, who is also its president, the presiding officer of the Council, a Police Commissioner, designated by the Mayor, and two regular practising physicians who shall have the same qualifications as the Mayor. An officer called a Health Commissioner appointed by the Mayor is also a member of the Board of Health. The Health Commissioner has general supervision over the public health. It is his duty to see that all laws and ordinances concerning the health of the city are enforced. He has power to make such rules as will be for the sanitary welfare of the city, subject to the approval of the Board of Health; to cause the removal of nuisances, when so declared by the Board of Health; to take measures to suppress and mitigate contagious or epidemic diseases; to issue burial permits, and keep careful records of the same; and to appoint all employés of the Board of Health and all who may perform any duties under their direction, excepting the Superintendent of the City Hospital, Superintendent of the Female Hospital, Superintendent of the Insane Asylum, and a Superintendent of Quarantine, when necessary, who are appointed by the Mayor. The appointments of the Health Commissioner are to be approved by the Board of Health.

School Board.

The first English school in St. Louis was established in 1804, and, like many others which were liberally patronized

in those early days, was a private school. The first board of trustees for public schools in St. Louis was established by the Legislature of the State in 1815. In 1833 another act constituted a body politic and corporate by the name and style of the "Board of President and Directors of the St. Louis Public Schools." The powers of this board were vested in a president and board of directors, consisting of two persons to be elected in each ward. The Mayor and Aldermen for the time being were not eligible to election. Members were to be elected for three years, one-third to go out of office at the end of every year. Success attended all these efforts to establish free schools in St. Louis, and this success did much for the interests of public schools throughout the State. In 1856 the Legislature passed a law appropriating twenty-five per centum of the State revenue for free schools. Of the sum thus appropriated St. Louis received a revenue of $27,456. The total income of the St. Louis schools was then upward of $87,000. In 1879 the Legislature passed an Act containing the following clause concerning the preservation of a permanent school fund in St. Louis and other parts of the State:

"All school lands heretofore granted by the General Assembly to any city or town, or the inhabitants thereof, for the purposes of public education, including all lands set apart or granted by the general government of the United States to this State, and lying within the limits of such city or town, for support of schools, and granted to, or placed in charge of such city, town, or incorporated board as aforesaid, shall constitute the permanent fund of such city or town, only the income of which shall be used for the support of the public schools in such city or town." The effect of this act was to remove doubts as to the status of the government land-grants, which constituted the greater part of this fund.

Under the present charter the School Board is composed of twenty-eight members, one from each ward, elected for three years. They are divided into three classes, one-third of the members, as nearly as is practicable, being elected each year.

They have the power, not only to govern the schools, choose their executive officers, and care for the large property belonging to the public schools, but to determine the rate of taxation each year for school purposes, which taxes are collected through the collectors of the city of St. Louis.

The officers elected by the Board are: a president and vice-president from their own number, elected annually; a superintendent, two assistant-superintendents, a secretary, a treasurer, an attorney, a bailiff, an architect, and a supply agent, all for the term of three years. A committee of three is appointed every year by the president, one of whom must be a member of the board and the others good accountants and citizens of St. Louis, to examine all accounts, vouchers, &c., of the secretary and treasurer, and the books and accounts of the bailiff and supply agent and report concerning the same to the board. It is the duty of the bailiff, an officer not always found in Boards of Education, to take charge of the real estate held by the board, to exercise supervision over the tenants of the board, to act as clerk of the auditing committee, to act as sergeant-at-arms at the sessions of the board, and to attend to various other matters not specially intrusted to any other officer. All elections of teachers are in the hands of the board, the appointments being made for one year upon the recommendation of a standing committee of the board called the "teachers' committee." The board also appoint all janitors and other necessary employés.

Assessment of Property.

The city of St. Louis is assessed by a Board of Assessors, consisting of a president, elected by the qualified voters of the city, and one assessor from each assessment district, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council. The Assembly determines the limits of assessment districts, and can change them at any time. Property is assessed by the district assessors within their districts between the first day of August of

each year and the first day of January following, and the assessment books are to contain as nearly as possible a full and complete statement of all taxable property in the city, to be completed by the third Monday in March of each year. Clerks and assistants in the assessor's office are appointed by the president of the board.

A Board of Equalization

Consists of the President of the Board of Assessors and four real estate owners in the city of St. Louis, who are appointed annually on the second Monday in March, by the Judges of the Circuit Court of the Eighth Judicial Circuit. This Board meets on the third Monday of March annually and remains in session four weeks. Its duty is to hear and determine all appeals from the decisions of the Board of Assessors, to adjust and correct the assessment books, if necessary, and to keep accurate reports of its proceedings for record in the office of the President. A certified ordinance establishing the percentage of taxes for the current year is delivered to the President of the Board of Assessors by the Municipal Assembly by the fourth Monday in May of each year.

The Collector

Collects all revenue derived from all sources except water-taxes. All collections are paid into the City Treasury daily and triplicate receipts taken for them, one of which is filed with the Auditor and one with the Comptroller. The Collector may appoint Deputies, may revoke his appointments at pleasure, may require bonds of his Deputies, but he is himself responsible for all moneys collected and for all acts of his Deputies.

A Recorder of Votes

Is appointed by the Mayor to hold his office for four years. The *Register* furnishes him with registration books in which

names of qualified voters are entered upon their taking the required oath, which it is the duty of the Recorder to administer.

A Board of Revision

Is also appointed by the Mayor consisting of one reputable citizen from each ward whose duty it is to meet with the Recorder of Votes at his office thirty days before each general election to examine the registration and make such corrections as their own knowledge or competent testimony may show to be needed. Of this Board the Mayor is *ex officio* President. They sit from day to day, not exceeding ten days, until they have completed their revisory work.

Officers of the City.

The following are the officers of the city of St. Louis under the present charter, both elective and appointive :—

Elective :—Mayor,
Comptroller,
Treasurer,
Auditor,
Register,
Collector of Revenue,
Marshal,
Inspector of Weights and Measures,
President of the Board of Assessors, who appoints one Chief Deputy, nine District Assessors being appointed by the Mayor,
Coroner, who names a Deputy,
Sheriff, who names thirty Deputies,
Recorder of Deeds,
Public Administrator,
President of Board of Public Improvements.

Appointive:—Board of Public Improvements, consisting of
Street Commissioner,
Water Commissioner,
Harbor and Wharf Commissioner,
Park Commissioner,
Sewer Commissioner,
Assessor and Collector of Water Rates,
Commissioner of Public Buildings,
Commissioner of Supplies,
Inspector of Boilers,
Health Commissioner,
City Counsellor and Assistant,
Jury Commissioner,
Recorder of Votes,
Jailer,
Superintendent of Work-house,
Two Judges of Police Courts and two Clerks of the same,
City Attorney and Assistant,
Chief Engineer of Fire Department and five Assistants,
Commissioners of Mullanphy Relief Fund,
Board of Police Commissioners,
Dead Animal Contractor,
Lamp Light Contractor,
City Gas Inspector,
City Slop Contractor.

Public Institutions.

The following are the public Institutions of the city:
City Poor House,
Insane Asylum,
Work House,
House of Refuge,
Court House,

City Hall,
Four Courts,
City Dispensary,
City Morgue,
Fourteen Public Markets.

A careful study of the charter of the city of St. Louis will convince any impartial man of its great worth as a frame-work for a system of municipal government. The length of the term of its municipal officers; the carefully-framed provisions to secure honest registration of voters and an honest vote at the polls; the guards and checks upon all who administer the financial affairs of the city; the provisions against an undue increase of the public debt; the plan by which the important offices filled by the Mayor's appointment are not vacant until the beginning of the third year of his term of office, so that as rewards of political work done during a heated campaign they are too far in the dim distance to prejudice seriously the merits of an election;—these are a few of its important advantages as a plan of city government. Since its adoption it has worked well and but few amendments have been suggested. A bill now before the State Legislature provides for a change in the composition of and mode of election to the School Board which will undoubtedly, if passed, improve that most important branch of the city government. This provides for a Board of twenty-one members, of whom seven are to be elected on a general ticket and the remaining fourteen by districts made by consolidating the twenty-eight city wards; members to serve four years, divided into two classes. A more manageable number is thus provided and a method of election is secured which will insure comparative freedom from that bane of good administration of city affairs in any branch of its government—the ward politician. The "Machine" is bitterly opposing the bill, and at this writing, March 1, 1887, its passage seems doubtful. Many cases may be found where, since the adoption of the scheme and charter, its provisions have